

IN THE CLAIMS:

1-28. (Canceled)

29. (New) A process for identifying companies likely to outsource services comprising the steps of:

importing from various data providers publicly available information comprising SEC filings, executive management changes, corporate mergers and acquisitions, and holding in a single data base the imported data for all companies including Positive Examples, Negative Examples and Candidate Examples including thousands of Candidate Examples;

reducing or extracting the publicly available information held in the database to obtain a set of metrics or features inputtable to a mathematical model;

applying data mining techniques to the publicly available information, and identifying Positive Examples each Positive Example being uniquely defined by a name of a company that signed an outsourcing contract with any provider and a date of signing of the contract; and further identifying Negative Examples each Negative Example being uniquely defined by a name of a company unlikely to outsource and a date of a predisposition not to outsource;

constructing the mathematical model, including constructing the model to take as inputs the metrics or features for each Positive Example and each Negative Example;

initially presenting all metrics or features to the model, followed by selecting a subset of metrics or features that are mathematically most likely to differentiate Positive Examples and Negative Examples;

training the mathematical model with the Positive Examples and the Negative Examples; categorizing each example as a Positive Example, a Negative Example or a Candidate company, wherein a Candidate company is a candidate for outsourcing;

for the categorized example, identifying a signal period, with the signal period being a time over which the metrics or features will be defined; with the signal period identification comprising:

25 specifying the signal periods for Negative Examples;
26 specifying the signal periods for Positive Examples;
27 including, for a company having both a Negative Example and a subsequent Positive
28 Example, introducing a Blackout Period so that a signal period for the Negative Example for the
29 company having both Negative and subsequent Positive Examples exhibits no influence with
30 regard to the subsequent Positive Example for the same company;
31 specifying the signal periods for Candidate examples;
32 predicting a likelihood or propensity that each Candidate company will enter into an
33 outsourcing contract at a current date;
34 as to the predicted likelihood or propensities, ranking the Candidate companies and
35 outputting a target list in which the Candidate companies are ranked.